Gold was first discovered in the Little Rocky Mountains as placer deposits in Alder Gulch in the late "eighties" by Pike Landusky and "Dutch Louie" Myers. These two men had just come from the Black Hills, stopping on their way up for a few days of prospecting in the Big Horn Mountains in Wyoming. As their discovery in Alder Gulch was nothing spectacular—good days' pay at the best—Pike began scouting the neighboring hills for quartz veins. He found an outcrop of gold- and silver-bearing quartz on the butte northeast of the present site of Landusky and located four claims: the Gold Bug, the Gold Boy, the Mary and the Ann. He took his samples to Deadwood for assay. When he returned he built an arrastre below the Gold Bug discovery and hauled the ore down on a "lizard." As most of the gold was combined with silver, his recovery was negligible. Meanwhile Pike had found a very good showing just north of the northeast end line of the Ann claim and there located the Little Ben claim, named after his son. He rustled some money and built a road from his new discovery around the mountain and down into what is now known as Mill Gulch. He built a three-stamp mill in Mill Gulch about half a mile above Landusky in which the stamps weighed 250 pounds each. The ore was hard and the gold, a residuum from decomposition of telluride, did not yield to amalgamation, so this venture did not work out well.

However, Pike continued to prospect the ground and left Bob Orman, his son-in-law, to carry on the work on the Little Ben claim. One day Bob was eating his lunch at a spring in the coulee below the working. He noticed a piece of black rock in the pool. He fished it out, broke it and found it to be quartz speckled with gold! He began at once looking for the source and within an hour had found the fracture which since then has yielded more than $3,000,000 in gold and silver. He and Pike located the claim, naming it the August because that was the month of its discovery. Pike acquired Orman's interest and began work immediately. He shipped a 20-ton car-load of ore to the smelter in Aurora, Illinois, for which he received a check for $9,400 from Mr. Bogey, his agent. Whereupon Pike bought a barrel of whiskey, knocked in the head and set it in the middle of the main street in Chinook. He ringed the head of the barrel with tin cups and woe unto him who did not stop and throw off a dipper!

At the time of discovery, the August claim was on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation and when the Indians began showing an intention of asserting their rights, Pike bought all the Winchesters in Chinook and armed his miners. Some of them quit because they didn't like the idea of shooting government wards under such circumstances, but Pike managed to maintain a crew and shipped ore valued at something more than $35,000.

In the meantime Pike had interested Messrs. Jacobson, Torgenson and Nobin of North Dakota in the Gold Bug group of claims, which he had patented in 1892, and was working on a deal with them when he was killed by a bullet aimed by Kid Curry in Jew Jake's saloon in Landusky on December 24, 1894. Jacobson, Torgenson and Nobin eventually consummated a deal with Pike's heirs for the Gold Bug group. They organized the Mission Peak Mining Company and a ten-stamp mill, equipped with plates and two tables, was built in Landusky. The ore from the Gold Bug mine did not lend itself either to amalgamation or to concentration on tables and the mill was soon closed, leaving the miners unpaid. The property lay dormant until it was acquired by the Little Ben Mining Company 30 years later for $8,000. However, the Mission Peak Mining Company did keep a watchman for several years. He also did the assessment work on an unpatented fraction of theirs, adjoining the Ann claim on its west side line and between the south end line of the August and the Ella C. claims. Therein lies a story:

Frank and Jake Liebert and Peter Sieh, intelligent men equipped with abundant energy and strength, had come into the district shortly after the turn of the century. Sieh was a graduate of Bozeman College and a competent assayer. They located some ground around the August and Little Ben claims and began an intensive prospecting campaign. In looking around, Frank Liebert stopped on the fraction mentioned above that belonged to the Mission Peak Mining Company. He worked clandestinely and got some good assays. About this time the...